

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EEWT, EGEN, ECE, CSCE, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET COMPLAINT ABOUT US TACTICS IN ECE

REF: MOSCOW 19637

1. DEPARTMENT IS PERPLEXED BY MEL'NIKOV'S ALLEGATION
(REFTEL) THAT US IS RAISING BILATERAL ECONOMIC AND TRADE
PROBLEMS WITH USSR IN ECE. WE ARE UNAWARE OF ANY US
PAPER PRESENTED WITHIN ECE WHICH "DESCRIBED IN CONSIDERABLE
DETAIL SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP,
INCLUDING EXAMPLES OF SOVIET MISBEHAVIOR." WE BELIEVE
EMBASSY SHOULD AVOID ENGAGING SOVIETS IN DEBATE ON
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THIS ISSUE, HOWEVER, WHICH COULD EASILY DEGENERATE INTO
SERIES OF MUTUAL ACCUSATIONS REGARDING EACH OTHER'S
TACTICS OR POSITIONS IN ECE. HOWEVER, IF MEL'NIKOV
IS WILLING TO BE MORE SPECIFIC, E.G. BY PROVIDING ECE
REFERENCE NUMBER OF ALLEGED US PAPER, WE WILL CHECK
INTO SUBSTANCE OF HIS COMPLAINT.

2. THE ONLY RECENT ECE MEETINGS DEALING WITH TRADE PROBLEMS WERE OCTOBER AD HOC MEETING OF EXPERTS ON INDUSTRIAL COOPERATION AND NOVEMBER MEETING OF COMMITTEE ON DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE. US REPS. AT BOTH THESE MEETINGS DELIVERED PLENARY STATEMENTS WHICH: A) NOTED

IMPORTANCE OF FINAL ACT, AND ITS FULL IMPLEMENTATION, FOR ECE TRADE ACTIVITIES; B) CITED RESOLUTION I(XXXI) AND DECISION D(XXXI) ADOPTED AT ECE 31ST ANNUAL SESSION CALLING FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION TO MULTILATERAL BASKET II MEASURES, INCLUDING PROVISION OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL INFORMATION; AND C) CALLED ON ECE MEMBERS TO COOPERATE IN IMPROVING THE INFORMATION SITUATION. REGARDING LAST POINT, US REP. STATED THAT IN "SOME ECE COUNTRIES" LACK OF ADEQUATE COMMERCIAL INFORMATION SERVES AS A HINDRANCE TO FULL REALIZATION OF EAST-WEST TRADE POTENTIAL.

4. AT NO TIME, THEREFORE, WAS USSR EVER SINGLED OUT FOR MISBEHAVIOR OR ANY OTHER CRITICISM AT THESE MEETINGS, EITHER IN PLENARY OR IN WORKING GROUP SESSIONS. NONETHELESS--AND EMBASSY SHOULD POINT THIS OUT TO MEL'NIKOV-- IF THE ECE IS EFFECTIVELY TO FULFILL ITS ROLE AS A FORUM FOR MULTILATERAL EAST-WEST ECONOMIC COOPERATION, DISCUSSION OF PROBLEM AREAS CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT BE AVOIDED. RATHER, THE ECE SHOULD SERVE AS AN ARENA FOR THE AIRING OF LEGITIMATE CONCERNS BY ITS MEMBERS AND, HOPEFULLY, ELIMINATION THROUGH FRANK DISCUSSION AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION OF HINDRANCES TO THIS COOPERATION.

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5. EMBASSY SHOULD FURTHER NOTE IN TALKING TO MEL'NIKOV THAT US DEL. TO COMMITTEE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE MEETING WAS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED BY FLEXIBILITY AND SPIRIT OF COOPERATION SHOWN BY SOVIET DELEGATION, WHICH FACILITATED REACHING CONSENSUS ON ADOPTION OF USEFUL, SUBSTANTIVE WORK PROGRAM. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SIMILAR BUSINESS-LIKE COLLABORATION AT FUTURE ECE MEETINGS, THE MORE SO SINCE THE ECE CAN ONLY BE AS EFFECTIVE AS ITS MEMBERS MAKE IT.

5. FYI ONLY. AS EMBASSY IS AWARE, SOVIETS HAVE CONSISTENTLY RAISED THEIR CONGRESSES INITIATIVE IN ALL ECE NON-TRADE SUBSIDIARY BODIES SINCE COMMISSION'S 31ST ANNUAL SESSION LAST SPRING. AS AGREED WESTERN TACTIC, WE, EC-9, AND OTHER WESTERNERS HAVE IMMEDIATELY REBUTTED SOVIETS ON EACH OCCASION, POINTING OUT THE IMPROPRIETY OF IN ANY WAY DEALING WITH THIS ISSUE EXCEPT AT THE COMMISSION LEVEL. THIS MAY POSSIBLY BE

AT THE HEART OF MEL'NIKOV'S COMPLAINT. US IS CONTINUING
ITS STUDY OF THE CONGRESSES PROPOSAL AND WILL RESPOND
FORMALLY IN DUE COURSE TO ECE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
STANOVNIK, IN ACCORDANCE WITH DECISION B(XXXI) AND
TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS SOVIETS
MAY MAKE BETWEEN NOW AND ECE 32ND SESSION NEXT APRIL.
ROBINSON

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